

To the most Honorable Assembly of the
Commons house of Parliament.



The humble Petition of the Artizan Cloth-workers
of the Citie of London.

Most humbly shewing,

That in the times of his Maiesties most noble Progenitors, Kings and Queenes of England, the State haue from time to time had an especiall care for the imployment and setting on worke of the said Artizans, and thereupon haue made diuers good prouisions for their relieve. Norwithstanding which, the Petitioners do not at this present enjoy or reape any or very small benefit by those former prouisions, but by reason of their multitude and their great charge of children (being in London and the Liberties thereof 12000 persons & vpwards) some of them are enforced for want of worke to betake themselues to labour in the Citie as Porters, Waterbeaters, and in other such like meane callings; others to returne home into their Countries, and there to be either chargeable to their friends, or to follow husbandry and dayly labour; others to depart the Realme to diuers remote parts in the world, where the secrets of their Art are disclosed, to the prejudice of those Artizans that remaine at home; and others for lacke of imployment are fallen to idlenesse and begging, and betake themselues to other euill courses, to the great scandall of the government of this Commonwealth. And if the Petitioners should not in some measure get worke from the Drapers of London, they might for the most part of them perishe for want of food.

That diuers complaints haue bin made as well to his Maiestie and to the Lords of his Highnesse most honorable priuie Councell, as to the Lord Maior and Aldermen of London, for soone course to be taken for their relieve and imployment, who haue shewed a great desire and willingnesse to relieue them, and taken much paines to effect the same.

That the Lord Maior, Aldermen and Common Councell in London, taking into consideration that one principall cause of the misery of the Petitioners, was their retaining of excessive number of Apprentises, and the too speedy setting vp of Iourneymen: wherefore at a Common Councell holden 24. Septembris, 16. Iacobi Regis, an Act of Common Councell was made, containing diuers wholesome prouisions for the remedy thereof, which doth not produce that good effect which was expect-ed, by reason that diuers obstinate persons will not conforme themselues therunto, vnlesse the same be confirmed by authoritie of Parliament.

The Petitioners do further shew, that of late time a great number of the petitioners and their families were relieved by the rowing and shearing of Fustians made within his Maiesties Dominions; but now by reason of the transportation of great quantities of Fustians vntrowed and vnshorne, the misery of the Petitioners is increased, and they are thereby deprived of a great part of their maintenance.

That the Petitioners haue exhibited a Bill in this present Parliament, as well for confirmation of the said Act of Common Councell, as also for the redresse of sundry other inconueniences; The which Bill they do most humbly pray may be enacted and established by this moit honorable Assembly, to the relief of so many thousands that depend vpon the welfare of the Petitioners.